

In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service on a telephony network, the method comprising:

at a telephony service location remote from a caller and a call recipient;

receiving, from the caller, a request for establishing a connection between a caller and to [[a]] the call recipient, the request having been initiated by the caller dialing a number associated with the call recipient; via a network device during a call process, wherein the call process includes at least one of a group consisting of a call dial phase, a call set up phase, a logical association phase, and a call connect phase;

receiving a command signal on the network device during a call connect process, the call connect process including[[the]] at least one of [[the]] a group consisting of a call dial phase, a call set-up phase, a logical association phase, and a call connect phase of the call process; and

in response to receiving the command signal, initiating a service other than a standard call connection transaction, wherein the command signal is received from a communication device of either the caller or call recipient.

initiating a transaction between the caller and the call recipient in response to receiving the command signal, the transaction being other than a standard call connection transaction,

— wherein the command signal is transmitted from a communication device of either the caller or call recipient, and

— wherein the command signal is other than a standard call connect command.

2. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the received command signal overrides a conventional billing protocol of the telephony network supporting the telephony service.

3. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal transmitted from the communication device received during the call connect process comprises transmitting the command signal associated with activating a single dedicated key on a keypad of [[the]] a communication device.

4. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, further comprising transmitting a prompt indicating a request to provide the command signal.
5. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the transaction service is automatically initiated in response to at least one criteria.
6. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 5, wherein at least one criteria is an attribute associated with the caller or call recipient.
7. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is [[issued]] initiated by the caller prior to the call connect phase.
8. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 7, wherein the command signal is initiated by prefixing appended the command signal to a dialed telephone number.
9. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein initiating the transaction between the caller and call recipient service comprises initiating a transmission of a data signal, wherein the data signal is associated with an activation of at least one key of [[the]]a communication device.
10. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 9, wherein the activation of at least one key of the communication device includes comprising activating at least one key from a plurality of keys, a plurality of keys associated with a plurality of transactions, wherein each of the plurality of keys is associated with a single transaction from among [[the]]a plurality of transactions.
11. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 10, wherein the plurality of keys comprise at least one [[of]]from a group consisting of a “\*” key associated with telephony and billing functions, a “0” key associated with interactive network operator and information services access, and a “#” key associated with commercial banking transactions between the caller and the call recipient.

12. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is received from a telephone, and wherein the telephone, upon activation of a dedicated key, transmits the command signal.
13. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 12, wherein the dedicated key is selected from a group comprising a “@” symbol, a color coded key, a programmable key, a menu item, and a button.
14. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is received from a telephone, and wherein the telephone, upon activation of a biometric trigger, transmits the command signal.
15. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal comprises an audio tone transmitted from a mobile telephone.
16. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, further comprising automatically associating a function indicated by the command signal with the caller as identified by a telephone number of the caller.
17. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 16, wherein the telephone number of the caller is derived from a caller line identity (CLI).
18. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, further comprising automatically associating the ~~transaction service~~ with the command signal based on the call recipient.
19. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is transmitted from [[the]]a communication device of the caller by operation of one individual key on said communication device.